THE BEGINNINGS OF TRAGIC COMEDY IN THE DRAMA OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

A SUMMARY OF

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF UNIVERSITY STUDIES OF THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY IN CONFORMITY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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ARTHUR EDWIN DU BOIS

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In addition to being a condensation of Chapter III, this article is also a summary of my entire thesis, " The Beginnings of Tragic Comedy in 19th-Century Drama," the original chapters of which were

I. " The Decline of the Drama "
II. " The Human Comedy "
III. Shakespeare and the 19th-Century Stage
IV. Literary Drama
V. Bric-a-brac Drama

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SHAKESPEARE AND 19TH-CENTURY DRAMA

By Arthur E. DuBois

No great acting drama was written during the 19th century. Shakespeare was over-popular then. His popularity prevented the writing of great acting drama. Playwrights only imitated Shakespeare. Or else they wrote only potboilers, curtain-raisers or after-pieces for Shakespeare. Or, since Shakespeare's popularity was so great that they could not get audiences, they turned to lyric poetry or the novel.

The latest exponents of this common account of the decline of the drama in the 19th century have been Nicoll in the *History of Early Nineteenth-Century Drama* (1930) and Meeks in *Sheridan Knowles* (1932). The theory fits the known facts that at least the great tragic actors of the century won their reputations on boards dedicated to Shakespeare; that 19th-century critics like Lamb and Hazlitt did not stop this side idolatry in talking of Shakespeare; that because of the number and variety of productions of Shakespeare, Shakespearean criticism became a fine art; that before Shaw no writer in the century dared stand up to Shakespeare. The theory is attractive also if one maintains with Mr. Nicoll that 19th-century drama was impotent because it did not grow out of its own times. The popularity of Shakespeare becomes one of the important signs of the damnable romanticism of the era, associable with such phenomena as Elizabethan, Greek, or mediæval revivals.

None the less, the theory seems to me too facile, especially because 19th-century drama was a product of its own age, not of any other age. Critics have not raised fundamental questions concerning Shakespeare's popularity in any century, especially the 19th. Perhaps they have been turned aside by an apparent indirection in the story of 19th-century playing or by the extraordinary amount of relevant material to be found in the memoirs of actors and dramatists, critical accounts of Shakespearean productions, the recent studies of Odell (*Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving*, 1920) or Watson (*Sheridan to Watson: A Study of the Nineteenth-Century London Stage*, 1926), or the texts of printed plays. Some of these fundamental questions follow.

I. What is the outstanding fact in 19th-century theatrical history before Shaw?

The 19th-century theatre was alive, but it belonged to the actor and the director rather than to the dramatist. It is questionable whether one often has, or can have, an age of great actors *and* great dramatists. It is also questionable who serves the theatre more, the player or the playwright. In any case, John Phillip Kemble, Charles Kemble, Mrs. Siddons, Fanny Kemble, Mrs. Warner, Edmund Kean, Samuel Phelps, Charles Kean, Ellen Tree, William Macready, Gustavus Brooke, Charles Mayne Young, Ellen Terry, Henry Irving, and others kept theatres open. Of these, Mrs. Siddons, J. P. Kemble, Edmund Kean, Macready, Phelps, and Irving were geniuses of the first rank. And the list includes no comedians (the Mathewses, Vestris, the Bancrofts, the Kendals, Toole, Liston, and others) and no foreigners (the Booths, Forrest, Sothern, and others).

Not only did these actors keep theatres open. They invented ways of producing plays realistically, naturally, artistically. The best playwrights collaborated with them in their most notable work: Browning and Bulwer with Macready, Planché with the Vestris-Mathews group, Robertson with the Bancrofts. In fact, these actors made the theatre of Gilbert, Pinero, and Shaw. Accordingly, a " decline of the drama " is at least not a decline of the theatre, and 19th-century theatrical history is a story of the stage as well as of the library.

II. What right has Shakespeare to sufferance on any English stage in any time?

Literary historians berate an age which produces no dramatist whose works will hold the stage and the library. They also berate as " romantic " an age which allows classic dramatists to hold the stage. A Molière or a Shakespeare, it seems, is a menace to every succeeding era. No English dramatist will be uninfluenced by Shakespeare because no self-respecting playwright can escape knowing at least some of his plays — next to being Shavian, accordingly, Shaw is Shakespearean. Since 1616 every English dramatist, moreover, has found it the harder to get a hearing because of Shakespeare. The big man always endangers posterity: the virtues as well as the sins of

the fathers are visited upon the children of the third and fourth generations. This reasoning leads to the conclusion that perhaps the healthiest era is that which tolerates no big men. All drama since the 16th century has been Shakespearean!

The admission of Shakespeare's greatness is so general that we are likely to forget at times a few platitudes involved in it.

(1) Shakespeare's plays are good acting drama because Shakespeare was an actor and a practical dramatist as well as a genius and a poet. It is part of their greatness as acting drama that they challenge an actor. They give him an opportunity for self-expression, for interpretation, for invention, which realistic plays, at least in their own time, do not give. Acting Shakespeare is like writing a poem about death or painting a still-life. The actor himself has to add to the play. Thereby he measures himself against his contemporaries. In the same week on the 19th-century stage one could see the Kembles, Edmund Kean, and Macready, or Macready, Samuel Phelps, and Charles Kean act Shakespeare uniquely. The Shakespearean actor measures himself also against the great actors of the past, a test to which even Douglas Fairbanks submits himself. Finally, a Shakespearean actor measures himself against his audience. If he can add nothing to the play which it wants he must be regarded as a misfit. Accordingly, numerous Shakespearean productions may indicate a live theatre. Shakespearean acting remains unique, a kind of norm, and imposes restraints upon acting. It also requires liberty-taking, begets rivalries, and so constitutes a valid challenge to the actor.

(2) Similarly, by being himself for three centuries, adaptable to changing times, Shakespeare is also a challenge to dramatists. It seems as essential to find out who in a particular age shall wear his gloves as it is to find out who shall wear the mantle of Garrick. In every age since the Elizabethan, dramatists have imitated or borrowed from Shakespeare. Yet they have been neo-classicist, romanticist, Victorian, realist; Shakespeare himself has been made each in turn. Shakespearean drama comes to be cultural,[1] a perpetual challenge within the

[1] Since actors were still classified as vagabonds in the 19th century, yet since Shakespeare drew together congenially men of title, scholars, writers, and actors, Shakespeare helped to reconcile many an actor to his lot. Phelps liked to boast

tradition of English drama for the playwright likewise to become classic: even Shaw measures himself by Shakespeare, yet is Shavian. Evidence of strong Shakespearean influence in drama, therefore, need not make an era less distinctive than another or a dramatist less individual or less representative of his time.

(3) And therefore it is a peculiar feature of Shakespeare's greatness that it has not constituted a severe traditionalism.[2] Though dramatists have imitated him always, English drama has changed. Restoration Shakespeare was not Elizabethan Shakespeare, and the 19th-century Shakespeare was neither. In his own time Shakespeare was not above courting the favor of the cruder sort in his audiences. He was not a formalist in matters of technique. In fact, he has always seemed a barbarian to formalists, requiring improvement.[3] As a result, particular features of his work have been emphasized at different times. Since Macready cannot be Kean or Kean be Kemble, Shakespeare makes an actor be himself in his own time. In short, Shakespeare is likely to become a menace to the drama only when he monopolizes the stage or when, as in academies, he begins to be interpreted rigidly.[4]

III. Did Shakespeare monopolize the 19th-century stage?

At least 25,000 plays were written during the century. And of these, at least 20,000 must have been produced.[5]

of Shakespeare's power to "cultivate" even an uncouth audience. And ultimately Shakespeare inspired the reluctant Macready with so ardent a love of drama as art that he achieved a "resolute determination to make legitimate drama worthy of its great mission."

[2] Macready was fearful of such traditionalism. He reports in 1845: "Heard the pupils of Sanson go through their course of theatrical instruction. It is an institution of the Government to train pupils, who are elected to the school, for the stage. I was interested, and saw the inefficacy of the system clearly; it was teaching *conventionalism*—it was perpetuating the mannerism of the French stage, which is all mannerism" (*Diaries and Reminiscences*, 1875, p. 541). Of course on his own stage inevitably an actor-manager "traditionalizes" its acting or mounting plays. But actor-managers die, and a Phelps breaks away from a Macready.

[3] See Hazelton Spencer, *Shakespeare Improved* (1927) and similar studies.

[4] See "Fossilized Shakespeare," *Sewanee Review* 42 (1934). 240-4; "Biographicalities," *Avenue* 1 (1934). 25-30; "The Critic Stars," *ibid.*, pp. 116-8.

[5] Computed conservatively from the bibliography which is Volume 2 of Nicoll's *History*.

Anæmic, dyspeptic, discouraged, lazy, untutored playwrights still yelp like Douglas Jerrold against managers, just as other writers whine about magazine editors who send them rejection slips. Like that of an editor, it is the prerogative of a manager, who commonly has a peculiar audience to gratify, to accept only plays suitable to his taste and purpose. At least after 1843, there were managers in London with sufficiently varied tastes and needs to give dramatists with plays a hearing. The average actor or manager is served by a new play, and he knows it. Macready wrote in 1816 (*Diaries*, pp. 102-3): "An original part is justly considered (as Kemble before me, and as I myself in the Slave had already proved) of the greatest service to an actor. . . ." At various times, Macready was very proud of his association with contemporary playwrights—Lytton, Henry Taylor, Knowles, Sheil, Browning, and others. And as a matter of fact, the average manager had scouts like the younger Mathews or Fitzball looking for new plays; often, too, he had special writers for his own theatre. Fitzball's career proves how anxious managers were for new acting drama.[6]

With many actors in the theatres, with provincial theatres and troupes springing up perpetually, with the number of London theatres growing, and with performances big with curtain-raisers and after-pieces, it was probably easier for a dramatist in the 19th century to get a hearing than it has been before or since.

IV. Was Shakespeare's popularity in the 19th century ultimately different in kind from his popularity at other times?

A growing number of studies like Babcock's *Genesis of Shakespearean Idolatry* (1931) or McKerrow's *Treatment of Shakespeare's Text by his Earlier Editors* (1934) tend to show, not merely that Shakespeare has always been "improved," but also that idolatry of Shakespeare began some time before the 19th century, and Shakespeare is closer to Dryden than to

[6] See Edward Fitzball, *Thirty-five Years of a Dramatic Author's Life*, 2 vols. (1859). Cf. Phelps and Forbes-Robertson, *The Life and Life-work of Samuel Phelps* (1886), *The Recollections and Reflections of J. R. Planché*, 2 vols. (1782), Charles Dickens, *The Life of Charles James Mathews: Chiefly Autobiographical*, 2 vols. (1879), and Stoker, *Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving* (1907).

Shaw. Yet we recognize in romantic criticism of Shakespeare at least a somewhat new method of reading him. And we know that he was performed an unusual number of times on the 19th-century stage.

But there were larger audiences, a greater number of theatres and of extraordinary actors. Even in the 18th century, neither Dryden nor Pope was ever seriously ranked with Shakespeare, who was commonly allowed to surpass Dryden as a dramatist, and both Dryden and Pope as a poet.[7] After all, to say with Johnson and many another neo-classic critic who regarded rules of art highly, that Shakespeare in picturing human beings transcended the rules by sheer genius — this was not to say anything very unlike what the romantic critics said nor to worship Shakespeare less than Fanny Kemble, Macready, Mathews, or any other romantic or Victorian worshipped him.

On the stage throughout the century, Shakespeare certainly had more lavish mountings and more notable runs than any other dramatist. Dickens, Knowles, the elder Mathews — any other Englishman worshipped him, often without knowing too much about him. Perhaps Shakespeare reached the height of his posthumous fame in this century, an age of great Shakespearean scholars and critics. To be sure, this popularity might have been parasitic, especially since reminiscences of Shakespeare are undoubtedly in the plays of all the literary-poetical dramatists: Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Byron, Browning, Tennyson, or Landor.

But the flexibility of the Shakespearean vogue is a sign of its underlying health in this as in other eras. Though they are sometimes superficially reminiscent of Shakespeare, Browning's plays are none the less Browningesque; Tennyson's none the less Tennysonian.[8] Actors, likewise, were drawn to Shakespeare

[7] See E. N. Hooker, *Reputation of Dryden in the Eighteenth Century*, Part 1, Sect. 7 (unpublished doctoral dissertation, The Johns Hopkins University Library, 1932).

[8] In his trilogy, for example, Tennyson was concerned with the problem of personal liberty for Englishmen, a respectable, characteristic theme. Since he was a man of letters rather than a man of experiences, it suited Tennyson to make his plays literary (and historical). The use of folklore material, dreams, portents like chess games, and his use of Shakespearean diction at times show that he was not concerned with the atmosphere of local color but, like Edna St. Vincent Millay in *The King's Henchman*, with the atmosphere of pure poetry. If his plays are not good drama, the fault is not Shakespeare's more than it is Sir Thomas Malory's or a hundred others'.

for varied reasons. Edmund Kean saw in him his own Byronic hopes, fears, and chivalrous impulses. Charles Kean was stimulated intellectually: his was a scholar's interest. Fanny Kemble saw in Shakespeare a beautiful understanding of universal human passion. Macready and Phelps found him an able technician and a person who commanded the respect of lawyers, ministers, statesmen, and others who therefore respected Shakespearean actors. Lillie Langtry made Shakespeare a "run-way" apron. For Irving, drawn to such plays as *Henry VIII*, he was a pageant. Nearly everybody associated with the stage talked easily about Shakespeare and attended Shakespearean dinners. Yet probably Gilbert was near to the truth in asserting that Shakespearean revivals were popular because, after seeing the play, persons need not read it.[9] At Sadleir's Wells, Phelps did not go to an audience demanding Shakespeare; he made it like Shakespeare, a Victorian.[10]

V. What were the outstanding developments in the 19th-century play?

19th-century dramatists cleared the way for tragic comedians like Galsworthy in *Strife* or Shaw in *Cæsar and Cleopatra*.

[9] "Unappreciated Shakespeare," *Foggerty's Fairy* (1890), p. 331.

[10] It is easy to find "signs" of Shakespearean influence and therefore easy to theorize about Elizabethan revivals. The pre-romantic novel, for example, is supposed to betoken an Elizabethan revival because it is easy to prove that the novelists knew Shakespeare and because certain romantic conventions (midnight owls, tombstones, villainous heroes, and the like) are common to the Elizabethan play and the pre-romantic novel. When one reads *Melmoth*, however, one is struck by the fact that Maturin is more interested in the age of Charles II than in the age of Elizabeth. And when one stops to think about the conventions of the pre-romantic novel and of the Restoration heroic play, one realizes that they are similar. The heroic drama of the Restoration was in part an Elizabethan revival. But it was more complicated than that, being also the froth of the epic ferment which had brewed the age of metaphysical poetry. The romantic Restoration play followed conventions discoverable in all romances; so did the pre-romantic novel. In the pre-romantic novel, therefore, one discovers similarities to both the Elizabethan and the Restoration play. The attitudes of the authors of pre-romantic novels and Restoration plays toward the passions are the same, and their conventional devices for checking excessive passion are similar; their desire to rouse emotion was fundamental, and their common tendency to rouse unusual emotions like terror, horror, wonder, were the same; they had a similar delight in unusual stage-properties—midnights, tombs, corpses, owls, monsters, heroes, heroines, noble sentiments, and so on. Chapter mottoes show that especially Dryden, Lee, Howe, Otway, and Rowe were more important sources than any Elizabethan dramatist besides Shakespeare. See note 44 below.

They cultivated the view that, regarded objectively, life is a comedy. It is tragic only from the point of view of the individuals involved in it. Plays were therefore devoted to a realistic portrayal of the human show. Outside the theatre, novels like Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, Balzac's *Comédie humaine*, Meredith's *Tragic Comedians*, and many of Barrie's stories ("Wandering Willie's Tale," "Tillyloss Scandal"; cf. "What Every Woman Knows") show similarly that the acquiring of the methods of a realist was synchronous with the willing devotion of one's self to laughter, often dark, at thousands of "two-legged animals without feathers." [11]

In this new genre, of course tragedy and comedy are confused; the stuff of drama seems no longer to be cut up into scenes, exclusively happy or unhappy in their ending. Life is inconclusive — the race, society survives the individual as function survives form, the song survives the Nightingale, or the sea Sophocles. One cannot, even in a tragi-comedy, any longer separate the black from the white sheep, for all are spotted, high and low, sublime and ridiculous, good and bad. Comedy comes to have the karthartic virtues of tragedy. Individuals like Roberts and Anthony in *Strife* die opposing each other, but their societies still go "happily" on, and "That's where the fun comes in."

Derived chiefly from 18th- and 19th-century discussions of humor and comedy, "signs" of the development of the new genre, tragic comedy, are as follows:

I. Social

A. Unusual attention to, and pleasure in, realities, details, local colors, the specific rather than the general [12]

[11] The "cosmic humorist" of Stephen's *Demi-Gods* becomes a known character (see Kreymborg, *Our Singing Strength*, 1929, p. 193): He is a nearly omnipotent observer, like Teufelsdröckh "alone with the Stars," a kind of impersonal god like Meredith's Comic Spirit. Meeting even "rancor with a cryptic mirth, laconic—and Olympian," he is Edwin Arlington Robinson's Lincoln in "The Master." Hazlitt's, Thackeray's, Meredith's sympathetic studies of humor indicate that the manifold neo-classic objections to laughter and comedy were being dissipated and that comedy was displacing tragedy as the best medium of reconciling men to the dog-cage Earth, purifying especially their social emotions. It is no accident that the 19th century was the first era of nonsense verse or that it produced *Punch* and *Life*.

[12] Laughter thrives on these realities because it feeds normally on incongruities. Everyone proves to be ultimately exceptional. Outside of thesis plays like Galsworthy's, type characters cease to be interesting. Especially the French "natural-

B. Levelling process, a razing of class or sect immunities to criticism, belief in an aristocracy of innate nobility rather than of inherited nobility, so that, for example, the "low" character of old comedy might prove to be a sublime or, like Eccles, pathetic personage; "men of feeling" and "intellectual dandies" become popular ideal gentlemen like Byronic heroes, and in an age that knew its queen as the "widow of Windsor," Cleopatra can become a "little child"—this levelling is a humanizing process, and men like gods, Roberts or Anthony, are brothers under the skin

C. Rejection of cosmological and the consequent acceptance of social points of view, so that exclusively happy or unhappy endings became the more difficult, concentration upon only things of the earth more essential in a sceptical century; moving away from divine comedies and human tragedies, even the evolutionist helped to confuse the happy with the unhappy ending, for though men might grow to a heaven on earth at some remote time, that prospect hardly helped to perfect their present lot, unhappy Moseses this side of a Promised Land; inconclusive endings in story or play result

D. Recognition of the fact that men are not only architects of their own fortunes, but also helpless agents of a determining society; hence, the adoption of sociological or historical points of view and the cultivation of thesis plays
   1. Recognition of conflict between society and the individual and of social and personal motives in the individual
   2. Recognition that society is responsible for the individual not only in accounting to him, but also in accounting for him
   3. Suspicion of rigorous or individualistic ideals of conduct, and consequent whitewashings of suspected characters like jailbirds and women with pasts
   4. Writing of problem plays in which the individual and society in one or another of their manifestations are protagonists

E. Adoption of a humorous point of view toward society and the individual, as in Meredith's *Egoist*
   1. Realistic treatments of society as a composition of individuals, not an abstraction

ists" (and from them, O'Neill) sometimes made the mistake of piling exception on exception in their search for realities, till they began to associate "naturalism" with only the abnormal or unnatural. Though realistic in method, consequently, their plays often had the "erotic, neurotic, tommy-rotic" effect of certain kinds of romance.

2. Acceptance of society as, on the whole, potentially good or, at least, as outlasting the individual
3. Complication of motives, seldom purely personal or social; as in many of Browning's monologues
4. Recognition that society is in a state of perpetual change, so that conclusion is difficult
5. Reconciliation to loss of individuality in society, distrust of individualists, Byronic heroes, bankers, faith in socializing influences like laughter, work, man-made ideals
6. Adoption of an impersonal, objective attitude; shielded, as Amy Lowell says, by a crazy quilt like a tent

II. Æsthetic

A. Increasing preference for comedy rather than for tragedy
B. Degradation of tragedy
   1. Use of prose instead of verse
   2. Use of vulgar instead of heroic characters
   3. Use of tragedy for occasional comments, treatments of social problems
   4. Discontent with conventional tragic plot formularies and especially with conventional tragic endings
C. Complementary elevation of comedy
   1. Use of vulgar characters in whom to embody noble emotions or sentiments, tragic motifs, social abstractions
   2. Deepening the scope of comedy until it is not merely a study of ephemera, fops and fashions, but of society in a comprehensive sense
   3. Distrust of artificial emotionalism
   4. Discontent with conventional comic plot formularies and artificially happy endings
   5. Recognition that comedy, like tragedy, may effect a purgation of emotion or reason
D. Confusion of genres in tragic comedy

Easier to detect now than they were in the 19th century but evident in hundreds of plays, these "signs" point the direction English dramatic history was taking involuntarily and give it coherence. The commonest types of play exhibit the "signs." [18]

1. Burlesques — written as after-pieces by the Broughs, Planché, H. J. Byron, Francis Talfourd, Burnand, and innumerable others, these hodge-podge plays domesticated the

[18] Of course the full-fledged tragic comedies (I, E; II, D) belong primarily to the very late 19th or early 20th centuries, beyond the scope of this paper.

heroes of old tragedies (I, B), shifted easily from unhappy to happy endings, picked ceaselessly in their punny fun-making upon artificialities (death speeches, asides, coincidence) in the classic English dramas burlesqued and upon ranting modes of acting them, introduced topical passages, cultivated a sense of humor even toward serious things like marriage, bishops, princes, and played havoc generally with the old doctrine of dramatic genres (II, B, C, D). Many of the writers of these burlesques were on the staffs of either *Fun* or *Punch*, in the midst of whom grew up W. S. Gilbert. His comic operas climax the productions of the school, and some of his early plays (*Dulcamara*, *Robert the Devil*) indicate clearly their origin in burlesque.[14] Except for occasional sentimentalities and instances of caution for practical considerations, in the operas Gilbert has adopted the humorous point of view (I, E).[15]

2. PLOT PLAYS, MELODRAMAS and PAGEANT DRAMAS — requiring playwrights to keep their hands in at managing a plot, the "pure dramas" were important chiefly for encouraging realistic acting and mounting of plays, for the more unreal the plays, the more real had to be the production (I, A), and so extraordinary attention was paid to matters of detail. Fitzball, Buckstone, and Boucicault were leading writers of melodrama and important innovators in stage realism. Still an authority on costuming, Planché was the leading exponent of pageant drama. The chief importance of these "pure dramas" as plays is that they might, and did, encourage the pouring of new materials into their "pure plots" to the creation of historical, thesis, or local color plays. Always the

[14] Realistic methods and points of view in play-writing or play-acting tend to develop separately. The high spots in 19th-century theatrical history seem usually to come when a person or group has the strength not to let one predominate over the other, to see a production as a whole. In contrast to methodical Charles Kean who was over-realistic in matters of historical detail, for example, Phelps had courage to work for a well-balanced play in producing Shakespeare; Macready had the same aim, but to a lesser extent. Important developments always occur when actors and playwrights, respecting each other, are coöperating to perfect, not originate, new methods or ideas for the general good effect: Planché-Vestris-Mathews, Robertson-the Bancrofts, Gilbert-Sullivan-D'Oyly Carte. One of the good influences of burlesque was that it required a good company rather than a good actor or writer, an influence reflected in all of Gilbert's principles as a stage-manager and practices in organizing his companies: no stars, no foreigners, and so on.

[15] See "W. S. Gilbert," *Sewanee Review* 37 (1929). 5-16. Naturally Gilbert tried but failed to write serious realistic drama.

melodramatist, in *The Long Strike*, describing telephone offices or conditions in Manchester during strikes, Boucicault wrote nearly a local-color or a social-thesis play. And his *Poor of New York* (cf. *Streets of London*) is significant as a picture of depression-conditions (I, D). In the realm of fantasy, Tom Taylor used pageant drama for developing social theses. Through many scenes dealing with as many fields of activity (industry, education, finance, medicine, etc.), his *Sense and Sensation* criticizes 19th-century society for its getting and spending and traces the cause of its troubles to never-ending attempts to be sensational (I, D).

3. Historical dramas—written by Henry Taylor, Shelley, Landor, Tennyson, Browning, and innumerable others, sometimes for the same effect as pageant drama, historical plays required increasingly accurate staging, costuming, and acting (I, A). Affecting the play itself, zeal for historicity required that human beings be exhibited as in life they were (I, D). In contrast to Shelley's, Landor's Cenci-play shows that the effect was to stimulate interest in social determinants. Sometimes the playwright became dominated by his materials so thoroughly that five acts were not enough — Landor and Tennyson required trilogies just as Galsworthy required a "saga" instead of a single novel. As in Browning (*Strafford*, *Luria*, and others) and Tennyson (*Harold*) personal and social motives were often shown in conflict. Tennyson, moreover, devoted his trilogy to the tracing of a social theme in English history (I, D), the growth of liberty, and Browning exhibited Strafford as a great man victimized by growing democracy (I, B, C). In addition, especially when they were written by Tom Taylor and Charles Reade (*Arkwright's Wife*, *The King's Rival*, *Masks and Faces*), historical plays whitewashed off-color persons, the effect being to make humanity neither black nor white, but spotted, so much good being in the worst of us (I, D; II, B, C).

4. Domestic dramas — fathered boastfully by Douglas Jerrold and written especially by Knowles, T. N. Talfourd, and Bulwer, often historical, these dramas of conflict between sentiments were important because in their devotion to the homelier passions (love for parents, for country, for lover, for

Christians) they humanized romantic heroes and heroines (I, B), because since they dealt with conflicts between sentiments and since sentiments could not be violated without shocking audiences, they ended inconclusively (I, C); and because they used precisely the same methods in tragedy and comedy (cp. Knowles's *John di Procida* or *Virginius* with *The Secretary* or Bulwer's *Richelieu*) except for the ending (II, B, C), thereby degrading the former and sublimating the latter. Like Charles Reade, Robertson belongs essentially to this school of drama. *Caste* is no more effective than Bulwer's or Knowles's plays in dealing with problems of human behavior, but Robertson's plays are fuller of observation of character and local color, more uniform in their closeness to life, more natural in their dialogue.[16]

5. NATURALISTIC DRAMAS — scarcely distinguishable from domestic drama but going beyond it to the development of a sentimental thesis concerning social behavior based upon some theory of human nature as in Ibsen's *Doll's House*, Pinero's *Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, Barrie's *Twelve-Pound Look* or Jones's *Evangelist* (I, C, D); developing late in the century and never so popular in England as in France, this type of play is important for consideration here chiefly because other types in England were continually approximating it, — the plot play of Boucicault or Taylor, the historical play of Tennyson or Reade, the domestic drama of Bulwer, Kotzebue, Fanny Kemble, and especially T. W. Robertson.

6. LOCAL-COLOR DRAMAS, of CHARACTER OR PLACE — though interest in local customs was commonly only in the picturesque

[16] See below; also my review of Meeks's *Sheridan Knowles*, to be published in *MLN*. Domestic dramas are to be distinguished from other kinds of sentimental drama, especially the naturalistic, emanating from a sentimental theory of nature or human nature; and, in turn, naturalistic plays, dealing with such sentimental theses, are to be distinguished from realistic plays which attempt consistently to describe things as they are, full of incongruities. An example of domestic drama is *Woman Killed with Kindness*; of naturalistic drama, *George Barnwell* or Southey's *Wat Tyler*; of realistic drama, Galsworthy's *Strife*. To be sure, there is an affinity between these genres, especially between the naturalistic and the domestic, the realistic and the naturalistic (see note 12, above, on *comédies rosses* and C. H. Bissell, *Les Conventions du Theatre Bourgeois Contemporains en France, 1887-1914*), so that, more or less normally, Southey's *Wat Tyler* is naturalistic whereas his "Eclogues" are domestic. I propose to publish studies of types of 19th-century drama noted in this section, especially Nos. 1 and 2, 4, and 7.

ones and though, as in Lemon's plays, attempts at character study were ordinarily mawkish, nevertheless, stimulated by the director's love for stage trickery or the actor's love for Dundreary roles, attempts were made to write plays about places and especially about characters. Boucicault's sense of locale (as even in *Jessie Brown*) was always strong, and plays like à Beckett's *Revolt of the Workhouse* or Hazlewood's *Hoppickers and Gipsies*, for propagandistic or scenic reasons, made setting integrally a part of the play. Picturesque eccentrics like Eccles in *Caste*, more-to-be-pitied-than-censured characters like persons with jail records in *Ticket-of-Leave Man* or *Mary Warner*, like actors with pasts (Peg Woffington in Reade-Taylor's *Masks and Faces* or Nell Gwynne in their *King's Rival*), and intellectual aristocrats (actors, artists, authors, journalists) and intellectual dandies (pre-Raphælites, æsthetes, bored sensation-seekers) — studies of these types appear numerously and significantly in 19th-century drama.[17] The "local" character could be added to any type of play, as Robertson put him in domestic drama, and especially the historical and the "local color" play are adjunctive. But particularly when, as in *Ticket-of-Leave Man*,[18] the playwright defends the accused innocent, the more-sinned-against-than-sinning, "local" drama approximates social drama closely (I, B, D).

7. Psychological drama—specializing in conflicts between complicated personal and social motives (I, D, E), often using prose and poetry in the same play (II, B, C), the plays of Landor, Tennyson, and particularly Browning produced ironies. And as the ironic approximates the comic or humorous point of view (I, E), so Browning's *Strafford*, for example, is Galsworthy's *Strife* with only a change of locale and peculiar

[17] See especially Brough-Holliday's *Actor's Retreat*; Muskerry's *Garrick*, Robertson's *David Garrick*, Robeson's *Comedy and Tragedy*, Thompson's *Linda*, March's *Lost and Found*, Brough's *Siege of Troy*, Lyste's *Only a Penny-a-Liner*, Hollingshead's *Birthplace of Podgers*, Burnand's *The Colonel*, Brough's *Endymion* and *Corsair*, Talfourd's *Ganem* and *Atalanta*. Often, of course, the "character" is very incidental to other things.

[18] Hawkshaw the detective is born in this play, and English bobbies, original in the 19th century, are often picturesque adjuncts of 19th-century drama. Gilbert was not especially original in picking characters (æsthetes, policeman, etc.) to delight in.

problem and without Harness to say " That's where the fun comes in ": representing different principles, involved in a conflict of personal and social motives, Pym and Strafford are like Roberts and Anthony.[19]

Its typical plays reflecting " signs " of tragic comedy, marking a transition between romantic and realistic play-writing, 19th-century drama comes to be a live product of its times, not killed by Shakespeare.

VI. What were the outstanding developments on the stage?

Studying stage history in *Sheridan to Robertson*, Mr. Watson shows that its direction, like that of dramatic history, was toward realism and that new developments tended toward the perfection of comedy rather than of tragedy. He suggests the influence of physical developments in the theatre upon modes of acting and of modes of acting upon modes of writing plays. He stresses the importance of burlesque and melodrama[20]

[19] To the list of types of plays perhaps I should have added the Romantic Tragedy of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, and Byron. It was nearly always based upon some faith in the natural goodness of man, and therefore naturalistic. In the Byronic drama, moreover, individual are opposed to cosmological codes of conduct (I, D). Yet in tracing movements in drama, since dramatic history is continuous like all other history, one has to begin somewhere; moreover, in championing the individual rather than the social, romantic tragedy was as inimical to tragic comedy as neo-classic drama, and the significance of domestic drama is, in part, that it levelled romantic heroes. Farces are of course always relatively realistic.

[20] " A literal realism had in the minds of all connected itself with a low comedy and melodrama. It seemed to many that no good would accrue to the poetic drama by an admixture of these contemptible influences. Nevertheless, as the traditional tragic manner gradually lost its vitality and the forces which had given rise to it were disintegrated in the years following the freeing of the theatre, it was precisely these vulgar arts of melodrama and burlesque that were preparing, not only to overthrow the ancient school of acting, but actually to replace it in the hearts of the populace and in the judgment of the sanest critics. . . . [The public] feeling . . . blindly for a new art, fixed gradually but firmly upon the ingredients out of which the newer comedy was to be built; in melodrama they found quick and concentrated action, also sentiment and domestic passion, and a moral elevation ever dear to English audiences; and in the lighter forms of comic art . . . they satisfied their longings for the play of wit, individual characters, naturalistic dialogue, a clear technique, and a wholly new method of acting to suit. Out of these ingredients, the workmen Robertson and Boucicault, who at the end of our period filled the dramatic horizon, compounded what has come to be considered the ' modern English comedy.' The fundamental difference between them, as Boucicault himself pointed out, was scenic: Robertson choosing for his work ' lodgings or drawing-rooms,' and Boucicault ' a more romantic scope ' " (Watson, pp. 313, 132-3).

and of character-acting (pp. 383-5, *passim*; cf. type drama No. 6, above) in contributing to progress in stage realism, and emphasizes the work of innovators like John Phillip Kemble (pp. 255, 261, 263), Macready (pp. 179, 187), Mme. Vestris and Charles J. Mathews (pp. 274, 194, 204, 198, 212, 197, *passim*), Charles Kean (ch. 10), Fechter (pp. 240, 278, 405), Planché (p. 273),[21] Boucicault (pp. 246, 249, 252), and of course Robertson and the Bancrofts.[22]

Extraordinary attention came to be paid to matters of detail in the acting and mounting of plays, especially for the sake of historical accuracy, the first effects of which were to make play-production hodge-podgey or spectacular, and to the domesticating of acting, making it more natural, more conversational, more suitable for lodgings or drawing-rooms. From memoirs and stage directions in plays and especially from *Sheridan to Robertson*, one gathers that there were three main movements in the development of stage realism: (1) the spectacularizing of plays, often hodge-podgey, requiring perfecting of mechanical devices, elaborating of sets, attempts to secure stage perspective, and the like; (2) the naturalizing of this stagey realism, especially for the sake of historical or "local" accuracy in costuming or setting and dialogue; (3) the tempering of this naturalness to the general good of a production and, especially in the theatre of Robertson and the Bancrofts, the writing of natural plays to go with natural acting and mounting. Of course these developments were not consistently progressive toward realism, not without set-backs and anticipations, but they nevertheless outline 19th-century stage-history and show that, perhaps even more than the drama, the 19th-century stage was alive and making a transition between a romantic and a realistic theatre.

[21] It is notable that Planché's ideal of acting in comedy was like Gilbert's. Cp. Watson, p. 339, and Gilbert's instructions to Lytton, described in Henry Lytton's *Secrets of a Savoyard* (1927), pp. 129-131.

[22] Mr. Watson sometimes loses track of chronology and naturally stresses innovators rather than adapters. Playing to small audiences in a small theatre after 1843, making use of new methods of acting and mounting plays without sensationalizing them, working for unity, though he derives from the tradition of Kemble and Macready, Phelps probably did as much as anyone to shape modern ideals of stage-management, influencing Robertson and Gilbert on the one hand and Irving on the other hand.

VII. Did Shakespeare hinder these developments in the drama or on the stage?

One of the platitudes concerning 19th-century Shakespearean criticism is that it made Shakespeare unlike his Elizabethan self; that is to say, he was adapted to the needs of changing tastes in changing times, made romantic and then made Victorian. This healthful process of adaptation happened in the theatre as well as in the library; so one would expect from the facts (1) that Mr. Watson has defined impulses toward realism emanating from plays not in themselves specially realistic — in fact, stage realism was in advance of dramatic realism; (2) that though *Troilus and Cressida* and other Shakespearean plays are often considered realistic, Shakespeare himself is romantic and might be expected likewise to stimulate stage realism, especially for the reason (3) that as a classic Shakespeare is an unusually challenging dramatist to actors in an age of actors.

Mr. Odell gives plenty of evidence in *Betterton to Irving*, and it is a fact easily demonstrated, that Shakespeare did challenge the ingenuity of 19th-century stage-managers. For example, all sorts of inventions were made, and patented, for insuring the effective disappearance of ghosts. But the real proof that Shakespeare did not retard the development of stage realism lies in a comparison of Watson's *Sheridan to Robertson* and the second volume of Odell's *Betterton to Irving*. In it, Mr. Odell indicates how healthful in its variety was Bardolatry, although he, like many others is a bit over-shocked by disrespectful, unorthodox, non-Elizabethan treatments of the bard who has inspired more footnotes than any other person. The chief impression one derives from Mr. Odell's work is that in the production of Shakespeare there were three closely related tendencies similar to those discovered by Mr. Watson outside Shakespearean theatres.

(1) There was a tendency to operatize Shakespeare's comedies and to make even his tragedies over into spectacles. On the early end of this tendency are such strange spectacles as Reynolds's scenic operatic wonders. *The Tempest*, for example, was furnished with music from Davy, Bishop, Purcell, Haydn, Mozart, Linley, Brahms, Rossini, and three others.

As Mr. Odell remarks (2. 137-8), the result was "obviously a mixture of schools." *A Midsummer Night's Dream* included a triumph of Theseus for a final tableau, in which were catalogued "Cretans, Amazons, the Minotaur, Ariadne in the Labyrinth, the Mysterious Peplum or Veil of Minerva, the Ship 'Argo,' and the Golden Fleece." [23] On the late side of the tendency are Irving's grand spectacles like *Henry VIII*, vividly described by Bram Stoker.[24] And in between are Macready's and Charles Kean's, all scenically elaborate in one way or another.

(2) There was a tendency to restore Shakespeare from Dryden, Tate, Cibber, Davenport, to his original texts and to deck him out with historical accuracy in costume or setting. Shakespeare, says W. J. Lawrence in his *Life of Gustavus Vaughan Brooke* (1892, p. 76) was smothered in "archæological detail." Whereas the first tendency was romantic, this tendency was realistic or, at least, objective. Going to extremes it involved producing some of Shakespeare's plays with no cutting (Odell 2. 244) or it involved one man's trying to produce all of Shakespeare's plays.[25] Always the tendency involved trying to see Shakespeare's plays either as Elizabethan or as of the time they described, Roman or Danish as might be.

(3) There was a tendency to produce interpretative versions of Shakespeare. This tendency involved cutting and mounting him to give a peculiar impression or idea, either to suit him to the special needs of actor, audience, or stage manager [26] or to secure a unified general effect.

[23] This description of Reynold's Shakespeare makes him an elaborate hodge-podge of tableaus, songs and dances, and whatnot, like twenty-four out of twenty-five burlesques of the period. In its *potpourri* character the music of the *Tempest* is like that of operetta before Gilbert-Sullivan, usually a mixture of popular tunes, hits from the minstrels, popular operatic arias, and so on. See J. C. Young, *Memoir of Charles Mayne Young* (1871) 1. 62; and Thomas Campbell, *Life of Mrs. Siddons* (1834) 2. 153, 255 for contemporary accounts of Kemble's spectacular *Coriolanus*. Not the popularity of Shakespeare but the popularity of Shakespearean pageantry interfered with Planché. See *Recollections* 1. 80.

[24] See, moreover, Sir F. Benson, *My Memoirs* (1930), p. 187.

[25] Benson produced them all. Although he was nowise sensational in doing so, Phelps mounted 31 of them, all but *Richard II*, the York trilogy, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Titus Andronicus*. See Benson, *My Memoirs*, p. 208; John Coleman, *Memoirs of Samuel Phelps* (1886), p. 215.

[26] Accordingly, Shakespeare was romanticized or domesticated for an audience brought up on Roche, Radcliffe, Lewis, Scott, and so on. When Edmund Kean

Shakespeare was romanticized, sensationalized, localized, domesticated, made historical. Evidently he succumbed to the same influences determining new styles of acting and writing plays. He did not, then, prevent the development of those new styles. His plays were even turned into burlettas and melodramas. He was burlesqued!

The burlesques of Shakespeare are important because they are typical of a very numerous kind of hodge-podge play popular in the century before Gilbert's heyday, a play which both Mr. Watson and Mr. Nicoll agree contributed to the growth of realism in drama or on stage, because burlesques exhibit a want of artistic idealism toward drama and illustrate a degradation of the doctrine of genres, and because they treat Shakespeare as they treated contemporary hacks.

The common practise of the burlesque writer was, punning at the slightest provocation, vulgarizing or "domesticating" his story, picking out artificialities in it and, at the end, turning tragedy into comedy by every conceivable means. In Dowling's *Othello Travestie*, accordingly, Othello is a negro and uses a

played Hamlet, "His scene with Ophelia was most full of passion and pathos; especially did it stir the house when, after commanding her to go to a nunnery, he hurried from her presence, and then, as if overcome by tenderness and regret, hastened back, and taking her right hand kissed it fervidly. This action, Hazlitt relates, had an electric effect upon the house. 'It was the finest commentary that was ever made on Shakespeare. . . .'" (J. F. Molloy, *Life and Adventures of Edmund Kean*, 1888, 2. 182). This stage business was more than merely theatric. It was realistic: at least it was doing what a Byronic hero should do. But the distance from it to sheer theatricality is not great, as the following instances of business in *Hamlet* indicate. "Herr Dervrient marked very strongly Hamlet's natural affection for his mother. When being instructed by his father's ghost of her part in the crime, he expressed finely, with his cloak thrown over his face, the climax of his horror. That this crime of his mother has spread a blot over his faith in the world, was the impression which his subsequent acting frequently conveyed. For the crime of his mother, he lost faith in women's continence, and saw no virtue for *Ophelia* out of a nunnery. In the scene with his mother after the play, his passion was mingled with affection, and, after his father's ghost had vanished from the chamber, his words to her were all spoken with endearments and embraces" (Henry Morley, *Journal of a London Playgoer*, 1866, p. 49). Dervrient domesticated Hamlet, but Bernhardt sensationalized him: "On the walls of the room where Hamlet talks daggers to the queen there were two full-length, life-sized portraits of her two successive husbands, and when Hamlet bids her look on this picture, and on this, the portrait of Hamlet's father became transparent, and in its frame the spectators suddenly perceived the ghost" (Brander Mathews, *Book about the Theatre*, 1916, p. 33). As Mr. Mathews suggested, Bernhardt's trick was *Ruddigorey*. Morley has an amusing instance of Fechter's attempt to domesticate Othello (pp. 278-9).

peculiar lingo borrowed from the Minstrels — he even tells Desdemona of having been a slave. To the tune of "Bonnie Laddie," Desdemona sings (1.2):

I'll tell you why I loved the Black, Too ral, &c.
'Cause every night I had a knack, Too ral, &c.
Of list'ning to his tale bewitchin',
My hair while curling in the kitchen, Too ral, &c.

Once while darning fathers' stocking, Too ral, &c.
Oh! he told a tale so shocking, Too ral, &c.
So romantic—yet so tender,
That I fell fainting 'cross the fender, Too ral, &c.

When I came about—ah, me!
I was sitting on his knee—
Grateful for the scrape I'd missed—
I thanked him—and he welcome kissed.

MORAL

Listen, ladies, if you please—
Never sit on young men's knees,
For though I got a husband by it,
The plan's not good—so pray don't try it.

At the end, Desdemona's ghost seizes Othello by the throat while he is smothering her to death, she herself comes to life and accuses Iago of being a villain, Iago confesses, and all agree to forget the past. In Francis Talfourd's *Shylock, or The Merchant of Venice Preserved*, Shylock is of course a usurer and pawnbroker. Antonio is a good fellow, but all his property is floating capital. Portia peeks and learns Gratiano has "the face" to kiss Nerissa when he thinks nobody is looking. Gratiano is glad she has "the face to be kissed." Portia has sense enough to tell Bassanio her picture is in neither the gold nor silver casket. Jessica thinks Laurence's "story of a withered heart" comes from eating "gooseberries, when green." Gratiano explains (Act 3) to the tune of "Think of your Head in the Morning":

I once was a buttons, but now have grown up
To powder, tail coat, and short breeches;
On the fat of the larder I dine and I sup
And the cellaret rob of its riches;

My master's choice weeds I enjoy when he's out,
Or for him at the Opera waiting
At the Public enjoy my half pint of cool stout
On affairs of the nation debating, etc.

Antonio finally requires of Shylock:

There are two points, though, that I must insist on,
You'll shave your face and look more like a Christian
And take your daughter to your arms again.

Shylock agrees,

I will, I swear,
Receive my heiress and cut off my hair.[27]

"A drama without the smallest claim to legitimacy, consistency, probability, or anything else but absurdity; in which will be found much that is unaccountably coincident with Shakespeare's 'Tempest,'" Robert and William Brough's *The Enchanted Isle; or "Raising the Wind" on the most approved Principles* typifies another kind of burlesque, more like fairy or classical extravaganzas of the time or like Reynolds's operatic versions. It opens with a significant prologue. The ghost of Shakespeare meets and complains to the Popular Comedian — the *Tempest* has been made over into an opera! Says the Ghost,

Aye—that most queer and het'rogeneous dish,—
With witchcraft and old fairy tales dressed up—
(Singular taste that could on Shakespeare graft
Old "Mother Bunch," bring to "Tom Thumb's" level
The plot of my most perfect play). . . .[28]

[27] The burlesque ends half apologetically with an address to such critics as might object to taking liberties with Shakespeare or tragedy:

So I'd invite them to reflect
That after all there may be
Such things as gravity incorrect,
And *meet* without the *grave-y*.
Then why your feelings throw away
On a fictitious sorrow,
Nor weep for fancied woes today—
They may be real tomorrow.

Dowling's and Talfourd's plays do scarcely more than vulgarize the story. The reverse was often done. Domestic stories were given literary titles, as in Moncrieff's *Lear of Private Life* or the anonymous *Othello of Private Life: Curse of Jealousy*. See Nicoll 2. 348, 506.

[28] These burlesques frequently required a considerable sophistication concerning literature. For example, audiences were evidently expected to remember *Tom*

> My tricksy Ariel in a ballet skirt—
> The fairy of a Christmas pantomime!
> My Caliban—a melodrama villain—
> Bearing Miranda off—(stol'n incident
> From Grindoff in the "Miller and his Men!")
> And then resorting to an ancient scheme
> From "Harlequin and the Three Wishes" borrowed . . .
> If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not—
> Do something, please—I'm not particular what—
> But soft—an odour wafts along the wall—
> Methinks I scent an early breakfast stall—
> I must get home—I'm not allowed a key—
> Adieu! . . .

When the Ghost has gone, the Comedian resolves to avenge Shakespeare,

> Beat them on their own ground—the play's the thing.
> We'll out-burlesque them! Ho, there! Prompter, ring!

The plot follows Shakespeare. Ariel is under the orders of Prospero, a conjuror, and together they require the Fairies to raise a big storm to wreck Alonzo's boat. Ariel assures Prospero that, according to his orders, during the successful storm he has preserved Alonzo as safely "as kings can be in these queer times of hot democracy." Caliban is a red revolutionary, who rebels (sc. 4) against polishing his master's shoes:

> Prospero. Well, sir, why don't you work?
> Caliban (giving shoe a single rub). Ay, there's the rub.
> Prospero. What! mutinous! out, vile, rebellious cub!
> Caliban (with sudden vigour). Oh! who's afraid? Blow you and
> your boots together. (Throws down boots.)
> My soul's above your paltry leather.
> Prospero (aside). That's democratic, and by no means moral!
> (to Cal.) Pick up that boot unless you'd pick a quarrel.
> You'd best not raise a breeze.
> Caliban. Oh, blow your breezes!
> The love of liberty upon me seizes;
> My bosom's filled with freedom's pure emotions.
> And on the "Rights of Labour" I've strong notions.
> Prospero. You want work then?
> Caliban. No—up for my rights I'll stick;
> I've long enough been driven—now I'll kick.

Thumb when, in Dowling's *Othello* (1. 4), Othello exclaims "Oh, Mrs. O! Oh, Mrs. O! oh, oh!"

Prospero is an exceptionally good wizard. Fernando is a wild youth who boasts of being a good sailor, gets seasick immediately, and after meeting Miranda reforms completely. When he asks her to elope with him (sc. 6), she hesitates: "But when we're gone, Pa'll get in such a rage." He comforts her, "Fathers are always savage on the stage." Alonzo promises Prospero large rewards (sc. 8) for the return of his son:

> Oh, if you can, with treasures we'll requite you;
> At least, what's very much the same, we'll knight you.

The play affords many opportunities for spectacle and stage trickery, use of trap doors, a practicable gallery on deck of ship (sc. 2), and so on. At the end there is the usual tableau:

> The scene at back flies rapidly open and discovers the Steamer lying at anchor in a dock of fairy-like structure—a lighthouse, R., in the shape of a chamber candle-stick, with a taper burning—a carpeted gangway, C., leading up to steamer, Ariel pointing up with his wand as "touters" do—Fairy ringing a steam-boat bell, L.—The whole scene to have a light and fairy-like appearance.[29]

Burlesqued in this fashion, evidently Shakespeare did not constitute an inviolable traditionalism.[30] But the surest proof

[29] The concluding scene is scarcely more elaborate than that which introduces Fernando to the Island—his fairy railroad disappears!

[30] See R. Farquharson Sharp, "Travesties of Shakespeare's Plays," *The Library*, n. s., 1 (1920). 1-20. Mr. Sharp says he has located 59 of these burlesques, of which 18 were of *Hamlet*, 8 of *Othello*, 7 of *Romeo and Juliet*, 6 of *Richard III*, 5 of *Merchant of Venice* and *Macbeth*, 3 of *Antony and Cleopatra*, 2 of *Tempest* and *Coriolanus*, and 1 of *Lear*, *King John*, *Winter's Tale*, and *Taming of the Shrew*. One or two of these were pantomimic vaudevilles rather than burlesques, like "Harlequin Othello!" (Nicoll 2. 465). Mr. Nicoll adds a few items to Mr. Sharp's list (1. 90-1; 2. 254, 258, 261, 269, 276, 297, 312, 389, 400, 460, 478, 481, 487, 506, 517, 518.), though his list by no means supersedes Mr. Sharp's since the latter includes American and other foreign burlesques and extends the series beyond 1850. Neither mentions H. J. Byron's *Rival Othellos*. Mr. Sharp shows that burlesques of Shakespeare emanated from Allahabad, Boston, Budapest, Berlin, Copenhagen, Milan, New York, Paris, St. Louis, and Vienna as well as from various cities besides London in the British Isles. He points out that they were commonly occasional in character, commenting upon actors like Charles Kean, Wilson Barrett, or Irving rather than upon Shakespeare. Even *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern* is in part a burlesque upon commentators upon Shakespeare, and Mr. Sharp agrees that it is the most literary of the lot. It should be said, moreover, that burlesques of Shakespeare were not different in kind from hundreds of other burlesques of *Rasselas*, *Lady of Lyons*, *Don Giovanni*, *Faust*, contemporary "hits," and so on. In mentioning them (1. 91), Mr. Nicoll groups them with burletta and melodrama versions of Shakespeare and with plays dealing with episodes from Shakespeare's life and with festival plays

that Shakespeare thwarted dramatic no more than stage realism is in the answer to the next question.

VIII. Did Shakespeare render individual dramatists impotent because they only imitated him?

Of course this question cannot be answered satisfactorily without giving individual consideration to each dramatist. The plays of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Byron, Landor, Browning, and Tennyson are reminiscent of Shakespeare to be sure, but they are less significant as constituting an Elizabethan revival than they are for being congruous with the non-dramatic works of these authors, recognizable as either romantic or Victorian;[31] similarly, with Arnold and Swinburne and a Greek revival. These authors regarded drama much as Milton did when he wrote *Samson Agonistes.*

Certainly aims are to be distinguished from means. And the fact must be recognized that in every age materials may derive from one source, one period, manners from another, and aims from still another. Dramatic history is pretty much the pour-

like Moncrieff's *Shakespeare's Festival.* He says they all "add fresh weight of evidence proving the wide-spread interest taken by both majors and minors in the plays of the 'Bard of Avon'" and show "revived interest in things Elizabethan." By similar reasoning, we must look for an Elizabethan revival in Allahabad, Boston, Berlin, Budapest, Copenhagen, Milan, New York, Paris, St. Louis, and Vienna. We must also look for a neo-classic revival—*Rasselas* was burlesqued—a Lyonese, a Corsican, and innumerable other revivals. As a matter of fact, the domestic plays with Shakespearean titles, the melodramatic versions, the burletta, the operas, the pantomimes, and the burlesques of Shakespeare do not illustrate the same things at all. And such curiosities as Moncrieff's *Shakespeare's Festival* or Brougham's *Shakespeare's Dream* are different from all. The last, for example, is an allegorical ballet, a pageant not at all "historic." Genius, Fancy, Fame, and Chronos exhibit to Shakespeare some of his own power, and he says,

> I have a sure abiding faith,
> A certain prescience that the blessed sun
> Will rise at last, and in that cheering hope,
> Despair is lost! Impatient heart, be still!
> For inspiration comes but at His will!
> I'll to my grassy couch once more and sleep;
> Awake I'm but a man, in dreams a demi-god!

Cp. Shakespeare as in Brough above.

[31] In general, 19th-century dramatists were trying to do things Shakespeare never thought of doing. There is a very illuminating comparison of *Julius Caesar* and *Strafford* in Charlotte Porter's "Dramatic Motive in Browning's 'Strafford'" (1900), pp. 190-222. Though it leaves much to be said, this paper is the most intelligent discussion of Shakespeare's influence which I have come across.

ing of new materials into old plots, Dryden following Shakespeare, and Shaw following Dryden. The successful or great dramatist like Shakespeare himself may borrow as much as the little dramatist, but he makes his various borrowings cohere, strains them all successfully through his own personality. Shaw and Gilbert were probably more influenced by Shakespeare than were Marston or Albery,[32] little men, although when one talks of Shakespearean revivals always one talks of the little fellow whose fault is not that he loved Shakespeare but that he stammered and stuttered in the presence. Accordingly, when one is dealing with inexperienced, immature dramatists,[33] persons who have not quite found themselves or adjusted themselves to their times or literary milieus, and they are most numerous in any century, one is commonly misled by the incidental or the accidental, the pure plot which may be borrowed, the manner which may be affected, or the want of unity or vitality which may be the result. Three examples illustrate the danger: (1) Albery's *Oriana*, (2) Mrs. Charles Kemble's *Day after the Wedding*, and (3) a school of borrowers from French drama.

Oriana (1873) is a mildly satirical play called a "romantic legend":

Able to be cured only if King Raymond and Queen Oriana are reconciled to each other, Peep, a crippled fairy, offers to help Oriana regain the wayward love of her husband, the King of Happy

[32] Gilbert thought *Lear* and *Job* the greatest works in literature. He respected Shakespeare and objected consequently to an irreverent treatment of a bust of him ("Unmanly Outrage," *Fun*, 1864, p. 62), though he burlesqued him. It is generally conceded that Shakespearean influence upon Gilbert was strong. It is evident in language and in characterizations like that of Jack Point. But it has never been studied.

[33] "Young" as a dramatist, Landor himself admitted that he could not make plot and character serve each other. The main characters of his trilogy, Fra Rupert and Giovanna, scarcely meet! In *Beatrice Cenci*, the failure is more evident. The plot is the sensational story of a father's loving his own virtuous daughter. The character-philosophy involves making both father and daughter victims of the Church. The first and last "scenes" serve the character philosophy. The middle scenes serve merely the plot although even they do not bring Beatrice and her father into conflict with each other. Interest in the Church as an instrument of the Count's and Beatrice's fates is divided, moreover, because it is represented in three ways in as many scenes: it is embodied in the confessor, in the Pope and his Court, and in the Count's rationalizations about superstition. The theme of *Beatrice Cenci* is no more Shakespearean or difficult than that of *Justice*. But as pure drama, the latter is more adept.

Isles. Oriana is given a magic ring, which has the power of inspiring love for the wearer. It causes a variety of troubles, giving Albery opportunity for satirizing actors in the human comedy. Having the ring and looking at himself, for example, King Raymond falls in love with himself. A revolution takes place on the Happy Island against him. The revolutionists are satirized. Raymond is finally disciplined by adversity and the ring. He returns to the arms of Oriana, who has donned armor and defeated the revolutionists, the leader of whom is transported to England where his fiery oratory will start no more blazes.

In his *English Dramatists*, Archer says of this play that it provoked unfortunate comparisons with Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* and Milton's *Comus*. As a matter of fact, it was evidently modelled after the former: Chloe reproduces Audry even to the turnip. But the aim of the play, like that of Albery's *Will of Wise King Kino*, was to satirize levelling tendencies of the age. It should be significant not for its resemblances to *Midsummer Night's Dream* but for its resemblance to Gilbert's palace-of-truth plays, such as *Iolanthe* or *Sorcerer*, beside which, only, it is a poor play.[34]

When the wife of the incomparable " Mercutio," when Mrs. Charles Kemble, wrote a play, one would expect her to revive Shakespeare. And *The Day after the Wedding* (1808), a one-act farce, suggests at once *The Taming of the Shrew:*

This simple-minded play uses only five characters: Lord Rivers, his sister, her husband, and their faithful old servants, James and his wife. The sister, Lady Elizabeth, has a fitful temper. Her newly-wed husband attempts to cure it by feigning a similar fitfulness. The conversion requires only one day, the day after marriage. And the audience is led to believe that it is probable then, it being easier for a man to reform his wife while they still love each other than later. At the end, the insufferable Colonel Freelove tells Lady Elizabeth: " 'Tis not an easy task to reform our characters suddenly. I expect to find you now and then relapsing into your former error; but you have experienced the evil effects of it; and reflection cannot fail to convince you, that affection and gentleness are the brightest ornaments of your sex, and the surest source of domestic felicity.

[34] Conceivably the composer might have vitalized the play, but Clay was no Sullivan, and Gilbert's libretti had no unusual success when Clay wrote the music for them. *Oriana* uses the methods of the writers of burlesques or extravaganzas, only it is more ambitious, more literary, less occasional, and therefore more inept.

The Day after the Wedding; or, A Wife's First Lesson is an adaptation of *La jeune femme colere*, not Shakespeare domesticated.[35]

French influence is supposed to have been strong during the 19th century. But its importance seems inconsiderable when one notes the variety of sources used by borrowers supposedly under French influence or when one realizes that all these borrowings were Englished,[36] usually made over into English domestic drama, characteristic of their authors and their times. Albery, for example, borrowed from Augier, Barriere-Godinet, Dickens, Howard, Hennequin-Delacour, Sardou, Shakespeare, and others. Merivale borrowed from Dickens, Goethe, Labiche, Ponsard, Sardou, Scott, and others. Clement Scott borrowed from Sardou, Ohnet, and also from Feuillet's *Le Village* which George Henry Lewes had already made into a pretty little piece for Mme. Vestris. Charles Reade[37] borrowed from Molière, Scribe-Legouve, Smollett, Tennyson, and others, and his "instability" is evident also in the fact that he could collaborate with such various persons as Boucicault, Henry Petitt, Tom Taylor, and Trollope. Wills, similarly, collaborated with Marston, Marshall, and Percy Fitzgerald, used for plots the stories of Charles I, Charles II, Eugene Aram, Faust, Jane Shore, Mary of Scotland, and Nell Gwynne, and borrowed from de Banville, Bronte, Cervantes, Goethe, Goldsmith,

[35] Fanny Kemble, *Records of a Girlhood* (1879), p. 6. *Smiles and Tears* derived significantly from the domestic Mrs. Opie's *Father and Daughter*.

[36] See Dutton Cook's account of Oxenford's and Marston's Englishings of Feuillet's "Roman d'un jeune homme pauvre" in *Nights at the Play* (1883) 2. 255-6, 198-200; 1. 58-60. Fitzball boasted of being independent of the French (*Thirty-five Years* 2. 363-4), but he was often ordered to adapt French plays: before 1850 (Nicoll 2. 302-7) he had taken nine from Scribe, Hugo, Boldieu, Pixerecourt. Yet his plays are not French. None knew better than he the value in England of domestic sentiment, and tears (*ibid.* 2. 401, 22).

[37] Like Robertson and Tom Taylor, Reade continually poured into typical domestic-drama plots new descriptive materials: the method is that of a novelist. See E. G. Sutcliffe's able "The Stage in Reade's Novels," *Stud. in Phil.* 27 (1930). 654-688. Studies similar to this of Collins, Tom Taylor, Bulwer, and others are desirable, as are studies of the influences of such novelists as Scott, Dickens, and even Fielding. Talfourd's *Glencoe* is more descriptive than *Ion* probably because of Scott's influence. As Mr. Sutcliffe suggests, the more descriptive the play became, the less challenge it makes to the actor to "realize" it. The result is that where the intelligent actor had formerly tried to make the romantic real, in the realistic drama he begins like Mrs. Kendal to etherealize realistic drama, to make it "sympathetic." See Mrs. Kendal's *Dramatic Opinions* (1890).

Jerrold, Tennyson, and others![38] Obviously, French borrowings do not signify making English drama French.

The main story of 19th-century domestic drama, in which Shakespeare plays a very minor role, seems to me to typify 19th-century dramatic history. The pure domestic-drama plot puts sentiments rather than characters or ideas into conflict and then, since no sentiment may be violated, effects a denouement by means of tricks like the discovery of long-lost parents or children with strawberry marks. Accordingly, in Knowles's *Secretary* the Duke cannot let his daughter marry Wilton because he appears to be a bastard. For the same reason, Wilton cannot ask her to marry him. Yet since love is single-hearted she can never, never marry anyone else. And so, by whatever means, a legitimate parentage must be found for Wilton.[39]

Peppered with sentiments, written even by Browning in *A Blot on the 'Scutcheon*, together with burlesque-extravaganza domestic drama was the most popular of stock 19th-century genres, important for levelling romantic drama, especially tragedy, to the plane of the bourgeois — so to speak, the heroic play becomes a matter of love and honesty rather than of love and honor. Into its type, plot writers poured new materials until flesh individualizes skeletons, and Knowles, Talfourd, Bulwer, Reade, Robertson are themselves. Playwrights were tested in part by their ability to discipline themselves to the genre, a midway drama neither romantic nor realistic,[40] pre-

[38] This list of borrowings is taken from the bibliography at the end of Clement Scott's *Drama of Yesterday and Today* (1899). Scott was well acquainted with French drama and his memory was aided by playbills, but he made no attempt at a complete listing of plays or sources.

[39] Containing an ideal domestic situation, developed with all the mannerisms of tragedy even to including a lower-comedy sub-plot, Knowles's *Hunchback* should be contrasted with *Richard III*, a romantic heroic drama. Knowles is usually described as "Elizabethan" or "melodramatic" rather than domestic. The difference between melodrama and domestic drama is illustrated by Herbert Lee's *The Avenger*; *The Moor of Sicily* and Knowles's *John of Procida*; *Bridals of Messina*, both using the same story, the latter exhibiting John weeping over a dead son rather than rejoicing in a liberated Sicily.

[40] In *The Secretary*, for example, Wilton is allowed a kind of nobility on the ground of his education, his capabilities, and his willingness to make the most of them. But Knowles steers clear of the problem of caste. Even the villain (1. 1) poohpoohs the notion of his marrying Lady Laura: "The very man, indeed, he is, wherewith Romancists matches disproportionate contract—wed pages with their mistresses." The romanticist might have allowed Wilton and Laura to defy the

cisely suited to the Victorian temperament of Knowles. Persons with romantic temperaments like Talfourd and Marston or with naturalistic temperaments like Bulwer or Fanny Kemble found the discipline a bit irksome. Talfourd and Bulwer, but not Marston or Kemble, got command of the play, and in their own proper time made names for themselves as dramatists, even adding vitality to the genre.

Knowles's function was to make domestic drama "literary," and he set about the task with all the zeal of a man of faith, often borrowing from Shakespeare, but still more often, and for the same reason, inventing his own rhetoric and rant. One may not say "you may marry her," but with the Duke of Gaveston to Wilton in *The Secretary* (5.4),

> This hand is yours
> When he, whose holy act of two makes one,
> Shall minister the nuptial ceremony.

This "literary" quality seemed to give domestic sentiments heightened dignity and satisfied Victorian audiences.[41]

By temperament, Talfourd was much more romantic than Knowles. His *Glencoe* is a romance domesticated.[42] But in *Ion* he wrote pure domestic drama; in fact, he gave the genre new vitality by romanticizing it. The Greek elements in this play, like the Shakespearean reminiscences in Knowles, were accidental to a larger purpose and do not belong to a Greek revival. Talfourd wanted to do two things, (1) to write a tragedy about (2) an all-good hero. It would violate domestic sentiment to have an all-good hero less than omnipotent on earth;[43] accordingly, since Talfourd was determined to write

Duke and marry, on the grounds of the equality of man or a world well lost for love. The realist might marry the two at the beginning of the play and then study the result.

[41] There was some notion of reviving a "national drama." See Cook, *Nights at the Play* 1. 115. Accordingly, Bulwer dedicated his *Lady of Lyons* to "The author of *Ion*, whose genius and example have alike contributed towards the regeneration of the national drama." Of course, Shakespeare typified national drama, but a sense of originality was none the less strong in the 19th century, as the very notion of "regeneration" suggests.

[42] See "Preface to Glencoe," *Dramatic Works* (11th ed., 1852), especially pp. 225, 227.

[43] Cp. Djabal in the ironic *Return of the Druses*. Fitzball knew that a tragedy was not likely to succeed in his time if its hero was killed in a cowardly fashion or if he killed someone else besides an utterly depraved wretch (as in Fitzball's own

tragedy, Ion could be brought to an unhappy ending only by the intervention of fate — hence, the Greek idea.[44] The addition of a supernatural agency was much better trickery than Knowles's strawberry-mark devices, and Talfourd was a much bigger poet than Knowles. Domestic virtue personified in Ion comes actually to be heroic. Accordingly, *Ion* ranks as perhaps the greatest of 19th-century domestic tragedies, bearing in it some resemblance to the work of Masefield.

Talfourd romanticized domestic drama in *Ion*, vitalizing it. Westland Marston tried and failed to do likewise. He could never discipline the romantic materials he used to the domestic-drama type of play he tried to write. His productions seemed always sensational, too domestic to be romantic, too romantic to be domestic. Treating neither history nor the present with the free hand and mind of a romanticist or with the close observation of fact of a realist, Marston, the misfit, was always being misjudged a romanticist and driven to explain that his plays were domestic drama.[45]

As Talfourd had romanticized it, Bulwer naturalized domestic drama. He worked hard for naturalness of dialogue and ease of plot in *The Lady of Lyons*,[46] and for verisimilitude and even historical accuracy in characterizations in *Richelieu*.[47] He had a sense of humor that at times came near to being cosmic and to making his plays approximate tragic comedy. In *Not so Bad* (2. 1), for example, Sir Geoffrey Thornside says,

> It is certainly an exceedingly wicked world; and what its attraction can be to the other worlds, that they should have kept it spinning through space for six thousand years, I can't possibly conceive—unless they are as bad as itself; I should not wonder.

Nitrocris) in a cowardly manner. (*Thirty-five Years* 2. 401.) And of course in domestic drama, in no manner should a son be allowed to kill his father. Accordingly, in the Sohrab-Rustum situation in *Ion*, Ion may not kill Adrastus.

[44] This is Talfourd's own explanation in "Peace to Ion." *Dramatic Works*, pp. 4-5. Talfourd's sources include Hannah More, Dryden, Rowe, Addison, Otway, and Home (pp. 6-8)! As he himself saw later, the desire to write tragedy was youthful (p. 6).

[45] See Shaw's *Dramatic Opinions* (1925) 2. 87-91; Cook, *Nights at the Play* 1. 58-60; Marston, *Dramatic and Poetical Works* (1876), pp. ix, vi-viii, *passim*.

[46] See "Preface," *Dramatic Works* (n. d.), p. 106. The English were conscious of the artificiality of their own dramatic dialogue. See Macready on Talfourd's *Ion* and *Glencoe* (*Reminiscences*, pp. 421, 464-5). This artificiality was not incidental only to the use of poetry instead of prose. But the novelists in particular like Reade and Bulwer were chiefly instrumental in modifying it.

[47] See "Preface."

The proper endings for plays in such a universe, though they might be a little less Dickensian, are the endings of *Not so Bad* or *Money:*

Sir Geoffrey. A great deal of dry stuff, called philosophy, is written about life. But the grand thing is to take it cooly, and have a good-humored indulgence—
Wilmot. For the force of example . . . for the follies of fashion, and the crimes of monsters like myself . . .
Sir Geoffrey. Ha! ha!

. . . . . .

Graves. But for the truth and the love, when found, to make us tolerably happy, we should not be without—
Lady Frank. Good health;
Graves. A good heart;
Smooth. An innocent rubber.
Geor. Congenial tempers;
Blount. A proper degree of prudence;
Stout. Enlightened opinions;
Gloss. Constitutional principles;
Sir John. Knowledge of the world;
Eve. And—plenty of Money.[48]

Bulwer, moreover, was interested in his times, and added descriptive materials to domestic drama: the election scenes and politicians and sympathetic pictures of the poor in *Money*; and the realistic pictures of poverty-stricken authors, like those of the "Owls' Roost" in Robertson's *Society*, in *Money* and especially in *Not so Bad as we seem.* Finally, Bulwer was a sentimentalist, tending in his novels and plays to illustrate the thesis that we are "not so bad as we seem," that, if man is not innately good, at least there is in each man an item of goodness which in crises may crop out. Like Robertson, therefore, Bulwer was always on the verge of writing naturalistic drama, but he lacked Robertson's ability to laugh at the unreality of the domestic-drama formulas.[49]

And so, Bulwer remained the successful domestic dramatist. When as a joke he gets Claude Melnotte and Pauline married,

[48] Such an ending suggests the comedy of humours. And in fact the Duke of Middlesex in *Not so Bad* (see note to 1. 1) was intended to "illustrate the humor of pride." And of all early English plays *Bartholomew Fair*, incidentally, seems to me closest to approach tragic comedy.

[49] Robertson laughs at his own formula in the first two acts of *Home*, domesticated from Augier's *L'Aventuriere.*

and particularly when Claude takes her to the home of his mother, Bulwer is near to the problem-of-caste or to the world-well-lost-for-love play. But he escapes to domestic drama by the domestic devices of introducing the shrew-motif and of easily elevating Claude in rank before letting him be happy with Pauline even though they have fallen in love. In *Richelieu* Machiavelli is made to conform to Mrs. Grundy: Richelieu is great, not because he can control a nation through its king, but because he can love and protect his ward. And in *Money*, too, Bulwer's final attitude is the domestic conclusion that after all, though it should be a means rather than an end, money is very helpful in romanticizing love stories: Clara wants Evelyn to make more of himself than a rich man, but she is very glad to have him rich.[50]

Fanny Kemble was not so successful as Bulwer in conforming to domestic drama. The instinct of this lover of Shakespeare and of Joanna Baillie was to distrust and therefore to domesticate even plays so unsensational as Kotzebue's *Stranger*, Shelley's *Cenci*, or Dumas' *Mademoiselle de Belle Isle*, the last of which she actually adapted.[51] But she was a strong-minded woman, a champion of the American slave, a divorcee in a time when divorces were uncommon; and her

[50] Bulwer sacrificed naturalness of character and plot in *Money* to write domestic drama. Evelyn, who is a kind of "secretary" at the beginning of the play, must be made rich before he can marry Clara: love in a cottage is not for those who are used to life in a castle. The eccentric will of an eccentric uncle must be therefore introduced. At the end of the play, in order to win Clara's sympathy and to free himself from a pledge to marry Georgina, Evelyn must be impoverished. The plot of the play moves entirely toward the creation of a domestic situation, during which Clara and Evelyn display a pitiful goodness of heart and as a result of which, though they are in love, for reasons of sentiment they cannot marry. Clara cannot marry Evelyn, she thinks, because their fortunes are disparate; Evelyn cannot marry Clara, he thinks, because for various reasons he has pledged himself to Georgina and a domestic hero must not break pledge. Natural motivation is sacrificed. Clara in particular caused difficulty. She had to refuse Evelyn so that he could engage himself to Georgina: she seems to do so because they are both poor. When he becomes rich, their fortunes are disparate. When both are poor again she offers herself like a good-natured heroine, in complete contrast to herself at the beginning of the play. Realizing the inconsistency Bulwer is forced to explain at the end of the play that Clara refused Evelyn at first because she could not help remembering how her poor gifted father, unnoticed earlier in the play, was hampered by a poor though loving wife. Nevertheless, Clara is much more believable than her prototype, Clifford, in Knowles's *Hunchback*, and Georgina behaves more naturally than Wilford.

[51] See *Records of a Later Life* (1882), p. 346-8, *passim*; *Records of a Girlhood*, p. 385, *passim*.

impulse was to defend the rights of women even in plays intended to kill women with kindness or show blots on a 'scutcheon. Accordingly, when she wrote an *English Tragedy* she made out too convincing a case for Anne, a young, lively woman unused to the country, married to a rigorous rather than a vigorous rustic old man. She herself concluded: "I think it might succeed, perhaps; unless, indeed, the story is too objectionable for anything — but reality." And Macready turned the play down because, though he found it full of "power, poetry, and pathos," it was "too shocking, too painful." [52] In the era of domestic drama, *An English Tragedy* was too domestic to be naturalistic, yet too naturalistic to be domestic.

The story of 19th-century domestic drama is that of pouring new materials into its type of plot and succeeding or failing to write a kind of play that was stock in the century and that did not derive from Shakespeare but from the peculiarly transitional nature of the period. Sometimes, as in Knowles, Shakespeare was drawn upon to help vitalize the play.

IX. Was Shakespearean influence upon 19th-century drama inevitable because 19th-century dramatists were romantic?

Obviously the romantic or the realistic is a point of view rather than a method, and persons of romantic or realistic temperament frequently assert themselves in a neo-classic era. The Victorian era was neither romantic nor realistic, but between. 19th-century drama is not unreflective of its times. There are more ways of picturing an age than photographing it. In reversing a conventional romantic ideal, that of a life of the imagination, Tennyson's "Palace of Art" reflects its age. And though it adopts a mediaeval motif, his "Lady of Shalott" develops the same theme and is none the less Victorian. As far as any general effect upon the course of English dramatic history is concerned, the influence of Shakespeare seems to me largely incidental and unimportant. 19th-century dramatists were not merely looking back to him. It is somewhat beside the point to condemn as arty plays which never aimed to be photographic.

[52] *Records of a Later Life*, p. 103.

X. What was the alternative to Shakespeare on the English stage?

Literary, practical dramatists never fill the theatres of a period. The decline of the drama was talked of while Shaw, Pinero, Jones, Galsworthy, Masefield, and O'Neill were all still alive. At least during the early part of the 19th century, Scott was considered the author next greatest to Shakespeare. In lieu of Shakespeare revived or Scott dramatized, there were (1) English burlesques or melodramas, (2) French drama, (3) Italian opera, (4) domestic drama, and (5) what? At the present time, in lieu of Shakespearean revivals, there are (1) Ziegfeld, Carroll, White, Shubert, *et al*; (2) Balaban-Katz-Keith-Proctor-Loew, *et al*; (3) the movies, (4) opera, and (5) legitimate drama.

XI. What was the reason for the decline of the drama in the 19th century?

It did not decline, and there were as many reasons for the failure of individual plays as there were dramatists.

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